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Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 28 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring to FIGS. 1, 3 and 4, a retaining ring 100 is a generally [[an]] annular ring that can be secured to a carrier head of a CMP apparatus. A suitable CMP apparatus is described in U.S. Patent No. 5,738,574 and a suitable carrier head is described in U.S. Patent No. 6,251,215, the entire disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference. The retaining ring 100 fits into a loadcup for positioning, centering, and holding the substrate at a transfer station of the CMP apparatus. A suitable loadcup is described in ~~Patent Application No. 09/414,907, filed October 8, 1999~~ U.S. Patent No. 6,716,086, entitled EDGE CONTACT LOAD CUP (EP Publication No. 1061558), and assigned to the assignee of the present invention, the entire disclosure of which is hereby incorporated.